



UNIVERSE

53

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NIGHTWING 53 LOBDELL • NICIEZA • MOORE • ZIRCHER • BONVILLAIN

THE BLUE LINE DISTRICT. BLÜDHAVEN.

My name is Ric Grayson. I've been told that before I took a bullet to the brain, I was Nightwing.

Former Robin, the Boy Wonder, bouncy human target--I mean, sidekick--to Batman.

I have no *memory* of that now, but it still raises the question: Who the hell is this guy?

And what the hell is he doing wearing a costume I deliberately burnt to ashes?

Or thought I did.

KID,
YOU HAVE
TO CLEAR
THIS AREA
NOW!

NICE
SUIT.

KNIGHT TERRORS

PART FOUR

BADGE OF HONOR

SCOTT LOBDELL PLOT FABIAN NICIEZA SCRIPT

TRAVIS MOORE & PATCH ZIRCHER ARTISTS

TAMRA BONVILLAIN COLORS AND WORLD DESIGN LETTERS

CHRIS MOONEYHAM & NICK FILARDI COVER

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KATIE KUBERT EDITOR JAMIE S. RICH GROUP EDITOR

NIGHTWING CREATED BY MARV WOLFGAN AND GEORGE PÉREZ



DON'T BE A SMART-ASS. YOU ARE OBSTRUCTING A CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION!

DO SUPERHEROES GET BADGES IN THE BLUD NOW?

Makes me wonder...

...did I look this cool when I was wearing that?



Focus, Ric.

I'm only here because my friend Burl was dispatched to a part of town that's been a wasteland of gang fighting since the elevated trains first went up seventy years ago.

I found his cab, but not him.

And this new "Nightwing" found me.

LET ME GUESS? YOU'RE A COP AND YOU DECIDED TO MOONLIGHT?

FOUND SOMEONE'S TOYS AND YOU'RE PLAYING HERO?



WHAT--? I--I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, KID...

Wow, nailed it on the first try.

I SAW YOUR CAB. YOU CAME TO HELP YOUR FRIEND, RIGHT?



I ADMIRE THAT, BUT YOU HAVE TO GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE!

YEAH--I'D LOVE TO...



...BUT I'M NOT LEAVING WITHOUT MY FRIEND!

I CAN'T PUT YOU AT RISK--



--AND I CAN'T LET YOU JEOPARDIZE THE SAFETY OF OTHERS BY WANDERING INTO AN ACTIVE CRIME SCENE.

This feels...strange.

Like I should have some sort of ownership of this costumed identity.

Stranger still?

That I don't give a bat's butt.





I have no idea if this guy is **competent** or **crazy**.

But I don't have much choice either way now, do I...?

CL-CLIK

HUH.

COOL.

Guess Dick Grayson was something of an escape artist.

CL-CLAK

Okay--get in, get Burl, get out. Let Nightwing take care of himself. Speaking of--

--how could he just **vanish**?



Geez--what am I doing here?



Nightwing got up there pretty quick.

He's got this...

...he certainly doesn't need...



...a sidekick.

ALPHONSE SAPIENZA.
DETECTIVE, FIRST
CLASS.

YOU'D THINK THAT
WOULD BE ENOUGH
FOR A COP TWO
DECADES ON THE
JOB.

IT WAS.

UNTIL THIS WHOLE
DAMN CITY STARTED
TO FALL APART
AROUND US...

...AND FATE
DECIDED I SHOULD
BE THE NEW
NIGHTWING.

MAN ALIVE,
THIS LOOKS A
LOT EASIER IN
THE MOVIES.





?

THWUMPA



NIGHTWING?!

OW.

ALL IN ALL, I'M GLAD I DIDN'T BREAK MY NECK.



IF I LIVE, I SO HAVE TO PRACTICE THAT ENTRANCE.

SERIOUSLY? YOU'VE BEEN GONE FOR *FOUR MONTHS* AND YOU PICK *TONIGHT* TO MAKE YOUR FREAKIN' COMEBACK?!

GET UP, MAN!



HE AIN'T EVER GETTIN' UP AGAIN!



Really, really stupid decision, Ric.



THAT... UHM... THAT WAS A LOT LOUDER THAN I THOUGHT IT WAS GOING TO BE...

RIC...



...WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?!

WRONG PLACE, WRONG TIME, YOU BUM!

Bum? Maybe it is time to get some new clothes.



THWAK

AAH--!



NICE THROW, MAN.

I WAS AIMING FOR HIS HAND.

BUT IF YOU THOUGHT *THAT* WAS IMPRESSIVE...



BRRAPP
BRRAPP

BRRAPP

--EVERYONE
DOWN ON THE
GROUND!



I GOT
YOU, BURL.

->AGH<- WHAT
THE HELL ARE
YOU DOING
HERE, RIC?

WHAT'S IT
LOOK LIKE?
I'M **RESCUING**
YOU!



IDIOT! THEY'RE
THE ONES GONNA
NEED RESCUIN'!

YEAH, MORE
RUNNING WITH
YOUR **LEGS** AND
LESS WITH YOUR
MOUTH.



**CLEAR
OUT, NOW!**

WORKING
ON IT!



SHOULDN'T
WE **HELP**
NIGHTWING?



GRAB--

YOU HAVE THE
RIGHT TO KEEP
YOUR MOUTH
SHUT.

KUNK

WHAM

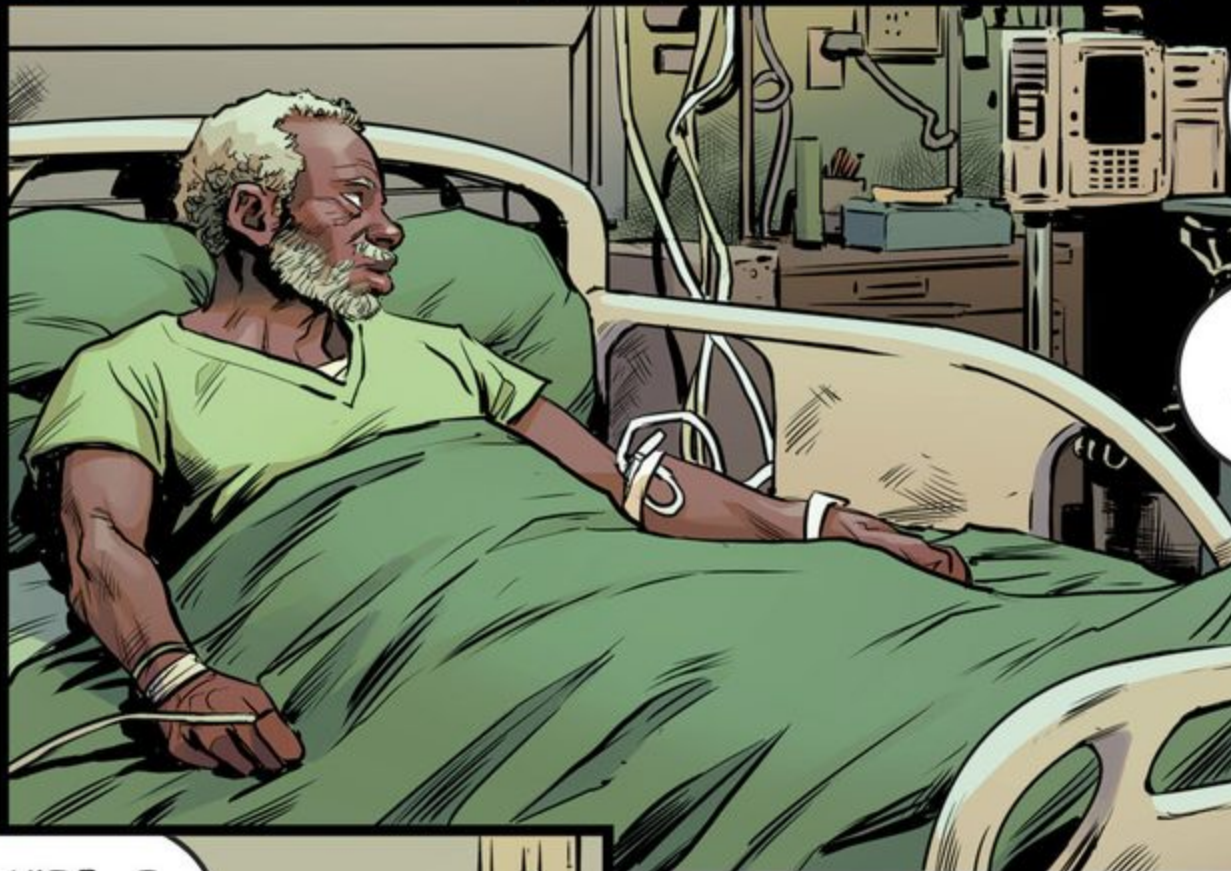
AND THE
RIGHT TO
KEEP *MOST* OF
YOUR *TEETH* IN
YOUR HEAD!

M-MOST?!

HE SEEMS
TO HAVE IT
COVERED.



THIS IS AN *AGE* THING--ISN'T IT?



NOT AT ALL. IT'S A *FRIEND* THING.

YOU MAY FEEL FINE, BUT THE DOCTORS SAID YOU WERE IN *SHOCK* WHEN I BROUGHT YOU IN.

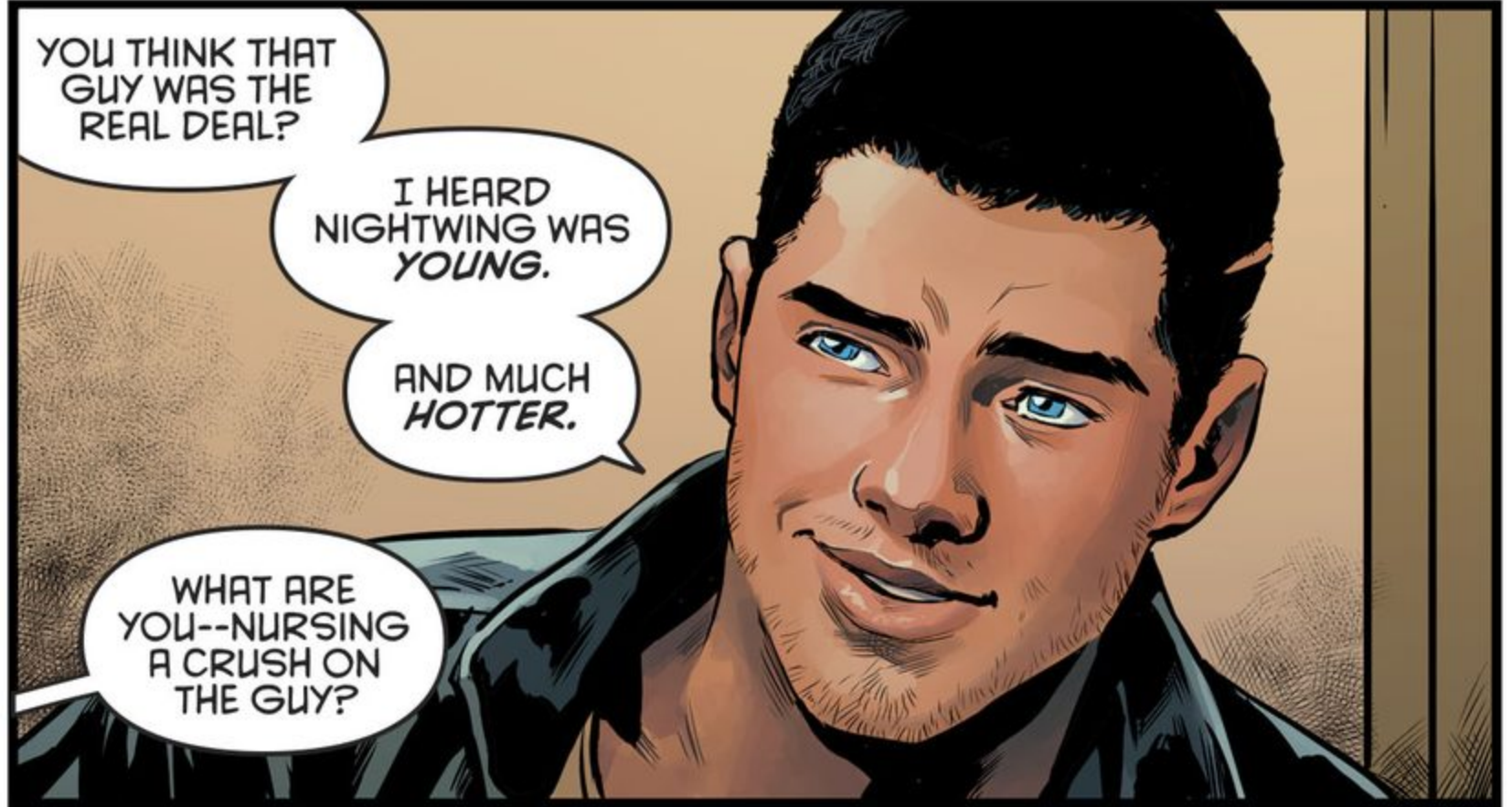
THEY WANT TO KEEP YOU OVERNIGHT FOR OBSERVATION.



YOU'RE...A GOOD KID, *KID*.

BUT THAT WAS MIGHTY STUPID OF YOU.

NIGHTWING IS A *PRO*. YOU COULD HAVE BEEN HURT.

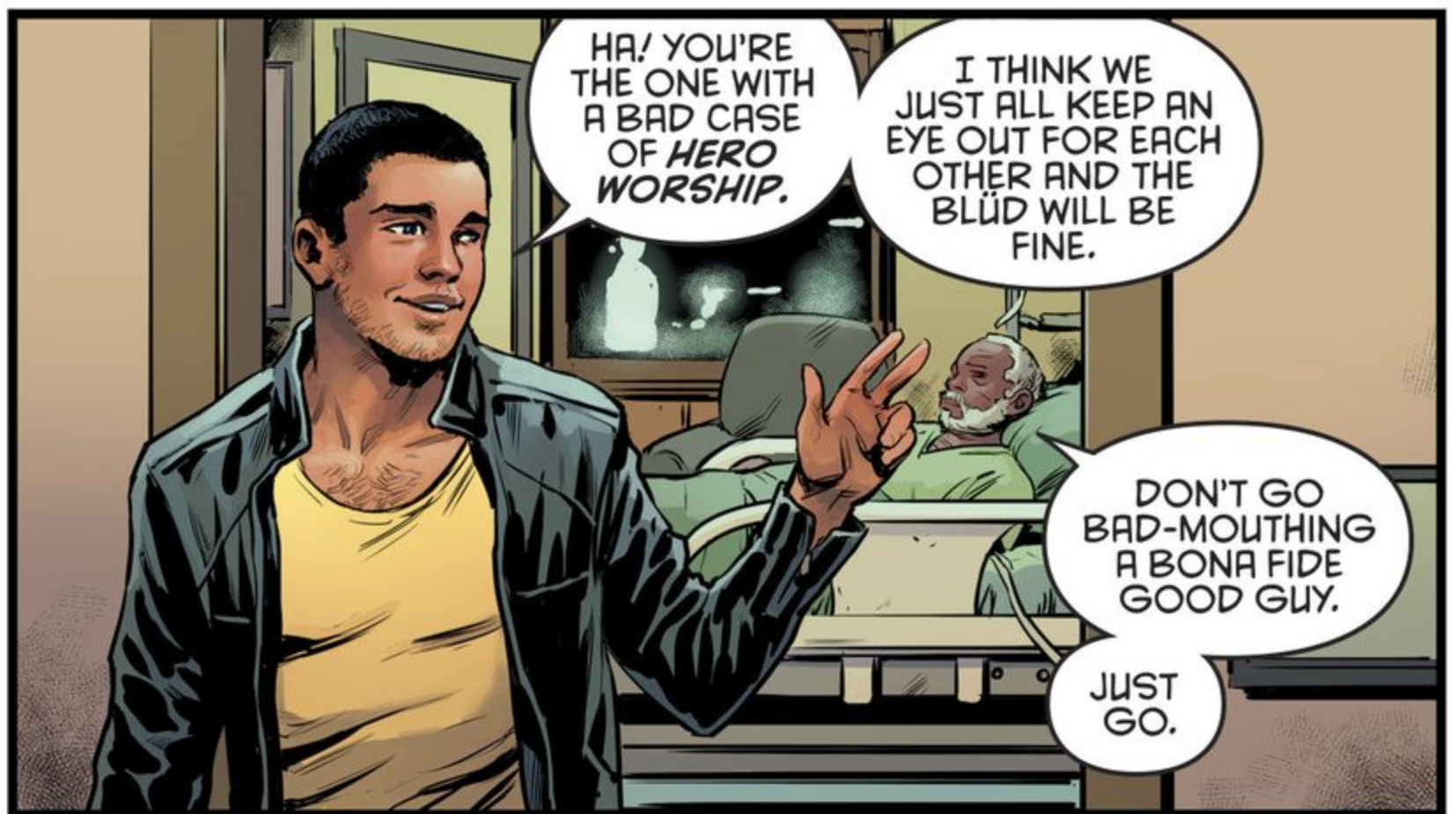


YOU THINK THAT GUY WAS THE REAL DEAL?

I HEARD NIGHTWING WAS *YOUNG*.

AND MUCH *HOTTER*.

WHAT ARE YOU--NURSING A CRUSH ON THE GUY?



HA! YOU'RE THE ONE WITH A BAD CASE OF *HERO WORSHIP*.

I THINK WE JUST ALL KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR EACH OTHER AND THE BLUD WILL BE FINE.

DON'T GO BAD-MOUTHING A BONA FIDE GOOD GUY.

JUST GO.



THANK YOU, NIGHTWING.

WHOEVER YOU ARE.





THE DREAMS HAVE STOPPED.

AS NEAR AS I CAN TELL.

AT LEAST I DON'T WAKE UP SCREAMING AND DRENCHED IN SWEAT.

PROGRESS, I GUESS.

THE HARDEST PART ABOUT BEING AN AMNESIAC--IT ISN'T WHAT MOST PEOPLE THINK.

IT'S NOT THE MEMORIES.

YOU CAN'T *MISS* WHAT YOU NEVER *HAD*.

IT'S THAT LOOK IN PEOPLE'S EYES. YOUR FAMILY. YOUR FRIENDS.

THE PEOPLE WHO *DO* REMEMBER.



I LOOK IN THE MIRROR AND SEE A STRANGER.

SOMEBODY I WANT TO GET TO KNOW.

BARBARA AND ALFRED... (WHO YOU MET)...

...THEY LOOK AT MY FACE AND ALL THEY WANT IN THE WORLD IS FOR ME TO GO TO BED AS *RIC*--

--AND WAKE UP AS *DICK GRAYSON*.

I CAN SEE IT IN THEIR EYES EVEN IF THEY DON'T SAY IT OUT LOUD.

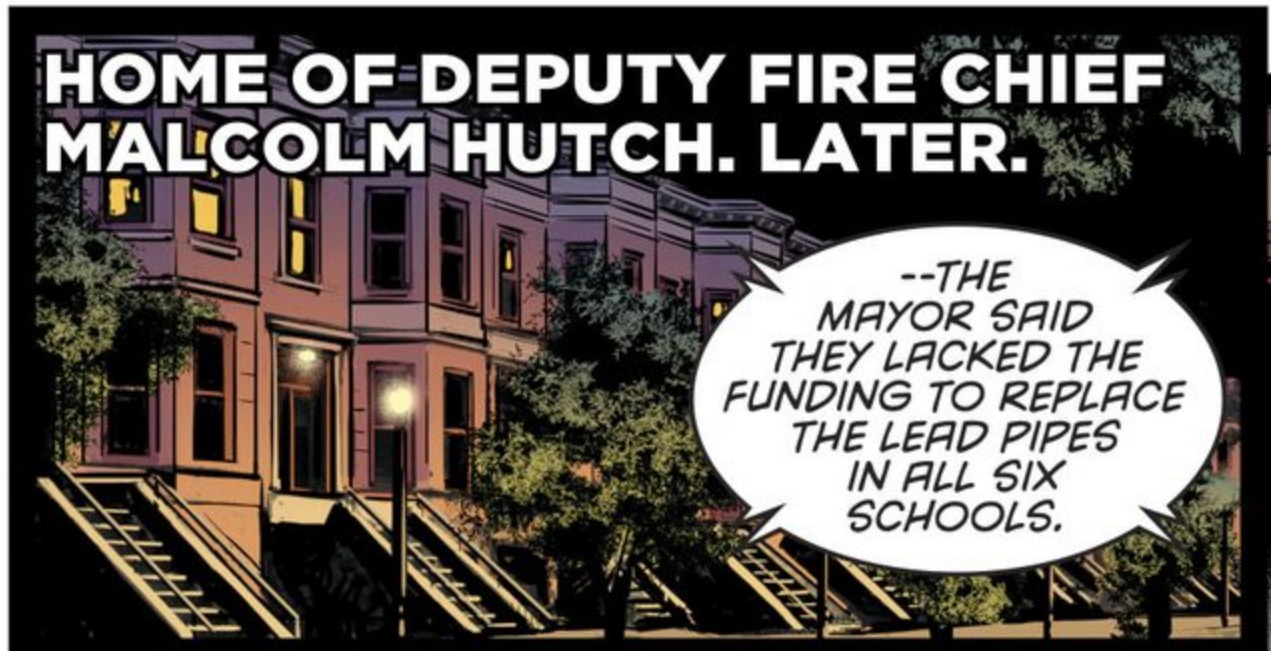
THAT'S WHY YOU'RE HERE ALL THE TIME?



THAT'S *ONE* REASON I'M HERE ALL THE TIME.

WELL, I CAN'T SPEAK FOR DICK GRAYSON, MISTER--

--BUT IF HE HAD THOSE BLUE EYES, IT'S NO WONDER THIS BARBARA WANTS HIM BACK SO BADLY.



HOME OF DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF MALCOLM HUTCH. LATER.

--THE MAYOR SAID THEY LACKED THE FUNDING TO REPLACE THE LEAD PIPES IN ALL SIX SCHOOLS.



IN OTHER NEWS, THE BPD ANNOUNCED A MAJOR GANG ARREST AND A RETURN FOR THE CITY'S BIGGEST HERO.

FOR MORE, WE GO TO VICKI VALE.



LIVE

THANK YOU, MONICA.

AFTER A LONG ABSENCE FROM THE STREETS OF BLÜDHAVEN, IT APPEARS NIGHTWING MAY HAVE RETURNED TO PATROL THE CITY STREETS.

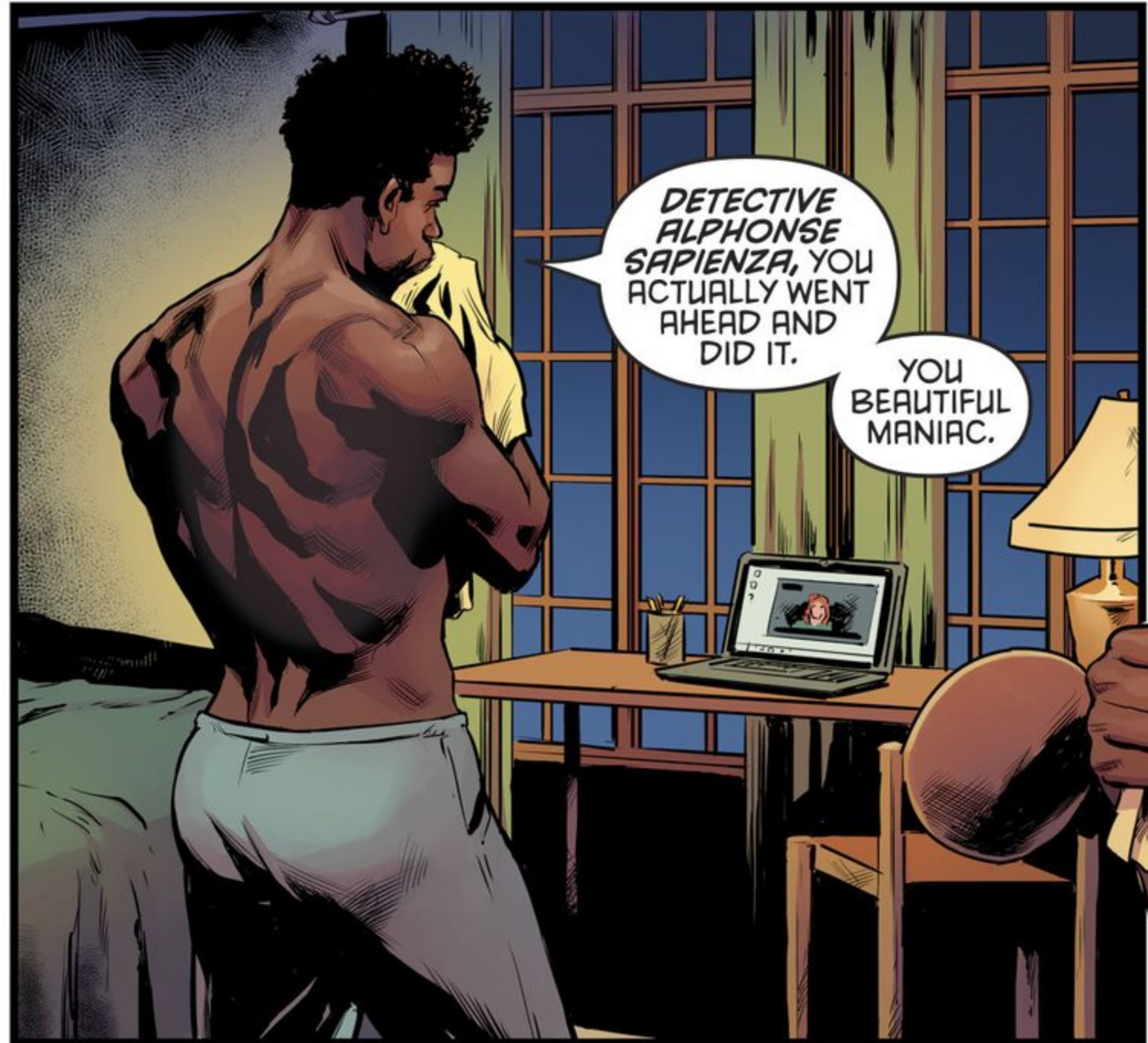
BREAKING NEWS
NINERS GANG MEMBERS ARRESTED



LIVE

SIX MEMBERS OF THE NINERS GANG WHO HAD BEEN TERRORIZING THE CITY'S CAB AND LIVERY DRIVERS HAVE BEEN APPREHENDED.

BREAKING NEWS
NINERS GANG MEMBERS ARRESTED



DETECTIVE ALPHONSE SAPIENZA, YOU ACTUALLY WENT AHEAD AND DID IT.

YOU BEAUTIFUL MANIAC.



BONK
BONK
BONK

?





SUNRISE.
HALYARD SQUARE PARK.

HERE
YOU GO,
BEA--



--BUT WHAT
HAPPENED TO
YOUR **IRON
RULE?**

SHUSH,
ROSA.

IRON
RULE?



I NEVER
FRATERNIZE
WITH PEOPLE
FROM WORK.

IS THAT
WHAT WE'RE
DOING?

IT KIND OF
FEELS MORE
LIKE A *DATE*.

HERE YOU
WERE TELLING ME
YOU STOPPED
DREAMING.



WE'RE JUST
TWO FRIENDS
HAVING
BREAKFAST.

YEAH, ABOUT THAT.
YOU DIDN'T HAVE
TO TREAT.

THE
ALTERNATIVE
WAS YOU
WATCHING ME
EAT.



I CAN'T LET
YOU *STARVE*
BEFORE YOU
PAY OFF YOUR
BAR TAB.

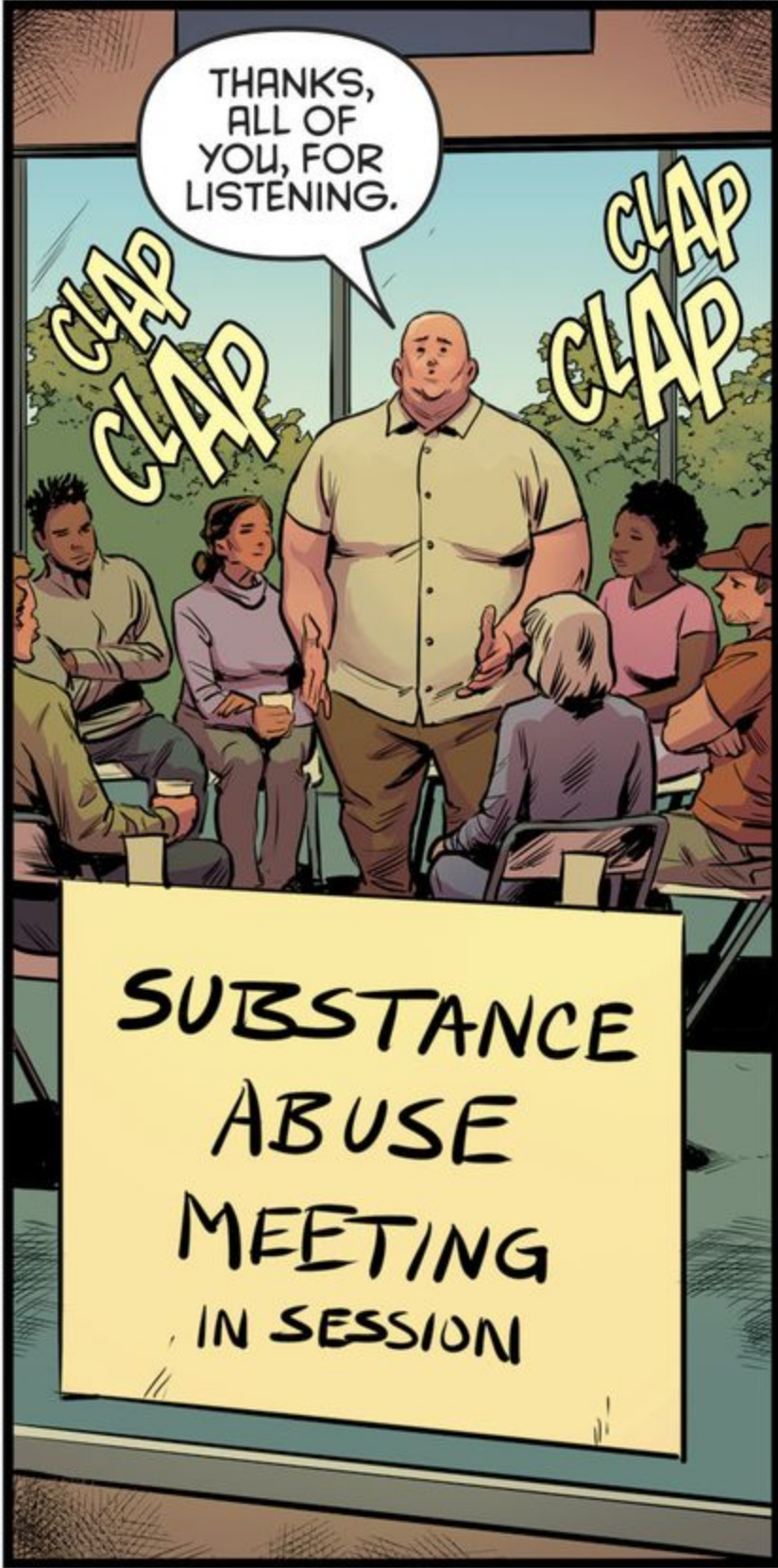
NOM
NOM





...what is there not to love about life right now?

...AND I KNOW I FAILED LAST NIGHT, BUT FAILING DOESN'T MEAN I'M GONNA STOP TRYING.



THANKS, ALL OF YOU, FOR LISTENING.

CLAP CLAP

CLAP CLAP

SUBSTANCE ABUSE MEETING IN SESSION



THANK YOU, TINY.
IS THERE ANYONE ELSE WHO WOULD LIKE TO SHARE?



NO ONE? VERY WELL, THEN...

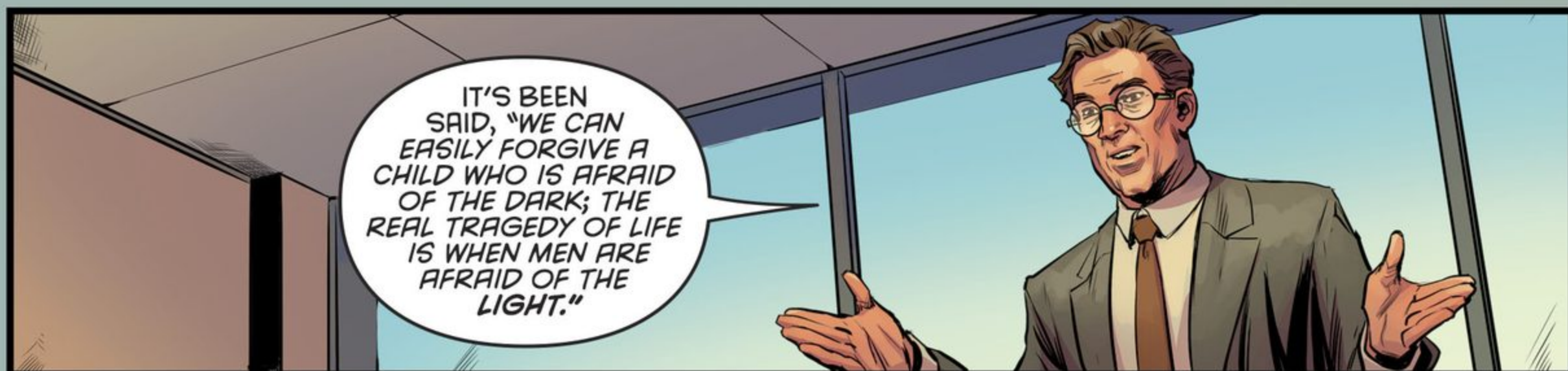
...IF YOU WOULD INDULGE ME, I'D LIKE TO SHARE.

AS YOU KNOW, I'M A RECENT TRANSPLANT FROM GOTHAM CITY. I WASN'T SURE HOW I WOULD BE ACCEPTED HERE IN BLÜDHAVEN.



BUT I WANT TO THANK ALL OF YOU FOR PARTICIPATING AND FOR YOUR HONESTY.

I KNOW IT IS NOT EASY TO FACE YOUR FAILURES AND YOUR FEARS.





...YOU
CAN BRING
AN ENTIRE
CITY TO ITS
KNEES!

NEXT: NOTHING TO
FEAR!

The rise
of
Leviathan!

TM & © DC Comics.

Metropolis

Greater

SUPERMAN
ACTION
COMICS



WRITTEN BY BRIAN MICHAEL BENDIS
ART BY STEVE EPTING

BEGINNING IN ISSUE #1007
JANUARY

DC NUCLEAR WINTER SPECIAL #1

The apocalypse comes for your favorite superheroes in DC's latest seasonal anthology

It is the season for eggnog, family gatherings and of course, apocalyptic dread! In DC NUCLEAR WINTER SPECIAL #1, Batman-666, Aquaman and more battle for holiday cheer in a bevy of nuclear wastelands.

But don't worry, it's not *all* doom and gloom. Heroics abound in some of our favorite stories from DC's holiday-themed anthology, spotlighted below!



CHECK OUT THESE
STORIES AND MORE IN
**DC NUCLEAR
WINTER SPECIAL #1**
ON SALE
NOVEMBER 28!



RIP HUNTER sets the stage

Playing the Scheherazade of this anthology, Time Master Rip Hunter attempts to distract a malicious horde of mutants by regaling them with tales about DC superheroes while his Time Sphere charges. Here's hoping Rip doesn't run out of stories! **Mark Russell (w), Mike Norton (a)**



SUPERMAN ONE MILLION in... "Memory Hearth"

Kal Kent, the Superman of the future, goes to celebrate a holiday with an old ally...or so he thinks. Suddenly, Kal is thrown back in time to the 21st century and forced to do battle in order to save the legacy of the Superman Dynasty. **Steve Orlando (w), Brad Walker (a)**



BATMAN-666 in... "Warmth"

The apocalypse has decimated Gotham, and the Batman of the future—Damian Wayne—couldn't do anything to prevent it. When his grandfather, the unconquerable Ra's al Ghul, shows up to haunt him, old tensions flare. Just another seasonal family gathering! **Collin Kelly and Jackson Lanzing (w), Giuseppe Camuncoli (a)**



AQUAMAN in... "Where the Light Cannot Reach"

Arthur is all alone and contemplating his existence amidst total nuclear decay when two scientists ask him to help locate some mysterious algae that might be able to absorb radiation and cure the Earth. Problem is, the algae can only be found underwater, and Aquaman hasn't dipped beneath the waves in quite some time... **Mairghread Scott (w), Dexter Soy (a)**



FIRESTORM in... "Last Christmas"

In this retro-futuristic story from writer Paul Dini, a family of super-villains think they're in a '50s-era sitcom, but they have a sinister secret: they've captured Firestorm and are using him to power their Christmas special. Can Firestorm make them understand his plight, or will they all barrel toward mutually assured destruction? **Paul Dini (w), Jerry Ordway (a)** ■

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